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WAR DEPARTMENT.

*Document No. 505.*

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF STAFF.

## PREFACE.

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Bvt. Maj. Gen. Emory Upton, United States Army, who graduated from West Point in 1860, and who became while almost a boy one of the most distinguished officers of the Civil War, rising to the command of a division of cavalry, left upon his death, in 1881, an unpublished manuscript bearing upon our military history and military policy. In 1904 the Secretary of War, Hon. Elihu Root, rescued this work from oblivion and directed its publication at the Government Printing Office, Washington, under the title "The Military Policy of the United States," for the reason that—

The work exhibits the results of such thorough and discriminating research, such a valuable marshaling of the facts of our military history, and such sound and ably reasoned conclusions drawn from those facts as to the defects and needs of our military system, that it clearly ought to be made available for the study of our officers and for the information of all who may be charged with shaping our military policy in the future.

A preface was written by Secretary Root, who, after showing that many of the mistaken practices pointed out by Gen. Upton in 1880 had been abandoned by 1904, went on to say:

One other field of great importance remains to be covered by legislation; that is, the establishment of an adequate system for raising, training, and officering the volunteer forces of the future. It is of first importance that the distinction between volunteers and militia shall be observed, and that, while the selection of officers of militia shall continue, as it must under the Constitution, to rest with the States, following such mode of selection as they prefer, the officers of the volunteer forces of the United States shall hold their commissions from the President, who is to command them during the war for which they are called out, and shall look to their Commander in Chief for the promotion which should reward their good conduct, as well as for such discipline as they may merit; and that an adequate system shall be provided for the selection of such officers and the direct recruitment of the enlisted volunteer force under the authority of the National Government. In this work will be found collected the facts, which it is sometimes unpleasant to consider, but which ought not to be ignored, supporting this view.

In order to bring to the attention of our citizens the facts of our military history as bearing upon the present problem of national preparedness for defense, the following extracts from Gen. Upton's work are republished.

H. L. SCOTT,  
*Secretary of War ad interim.*

FEBRUARY 18, 1916.



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# THE MILITARY POLICY OF THE UNITED STATES.

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## INTRODUCTION.

Shortly after the disastrous battle of Camden, Washington wrote to the President of Congress "what we need is a good army, not a large one." Unfortunately for the country, the object sought by this assertion, so thoroughly in harmony with our cherished institutions, has only been partially attained in time of peace.

Our military policy, or, as many would affirm, our want of it, has now been tested during more than a century. It has been tried in foreign, domestic, and Indian wars, and while military men, from painful experience, are united as to its defects and dangers, our final success in each conflict has so blinded the popular mind, as to induce the belief that as a nation we are invincible.

History records our triumph in the Revolution, in the War of 1812, in the Florida War, in the Mexican War, and in the great rebellion, and as nearly all of these wars were largely begun by militia and volunteers, the conviction has been produced that with us a regular army is not a necessity.

In relating the events of these wars the historian has generally limited himself to describing the battles that have been fought, without seeking to investigate the delays and disasters by which they have been prolonged till, in nearly every instance, the national resources have been exhausted.

All of our wars have been prolonged for want of judicious and economical preparation.

To such volunteers as enlisted for the period of the Mexican War, and particularly for two and three years during the War of the Rebellion, with whom it is my pride to have served and to whom I owe all of my advancement in the service, I but express the opinion of all military men in testifying that their excellence was due not to the fact that they were volunteers, but to the more important fact that their long term of service enabled them to become, in the highest sense, regulars in drill, discipline, and courage.

Up to the Mexican War there was little that was glorious in our military history.

In the Revolution, the Continentals or Regulars often displayed a valor deserving of victory, but which was snatched away by the misconduct of undisciplined troops.

In the War of 1812 the discipline and victories of the Navy alone saved the country from dishonor. On the land the historian of the Army was glad to slur over needless disasters, to dwell on the heroism in the open field displayed by the Regulars at Chippewa and Lundys Lane. The Mexican War was a succession of victories. The Volunteers as well as the Regulars were disciplined troops.



The Rebellion began with the defeat at Bull Run, but a multitude of subsequent battles again proved that the valor of disciplined American troops, be they Regulars or Volunteers, can not be excelled by the best armies of Europe.

In order that this work may not be misjudged we will first indicate to the reader the chief causes of weakness of our present system, and next will outline the system which ought to replace it.

The causes of the weakness are as follows:

First. The employment of militia and undisciplined troops commanded by generals and officers utterly ignorant of the military art.

Second. Short enlistments from three months to three years, instead of for or during the war.

Third. Reliance upon voluntary enlistments, instead of voluntary enlistments coupled with conscription.

Fourth. The intrusion of the States in military affairs and the consequent waging of all our wars on the theory that we are a confederacy instead of a nation.

Fifth. Confusing Volunteers with militia and surrendering to the States the right to commission officers of Volunteers the same as officers of militia.

Sixth. The bounty—a national consequence of voluntary enlistments.

Seventh. The failure to appreciate military education, and to distribute trained officers as battalion, regimental, and higher commanders in our volunteer armies.

Eighth. The want of territorial recruitment and regimental depots.

Ninth. The want of postgraduate schools to educate our officers in strategy and the higher principles of the art of war.

Tenth. The assumption of command by the Secretary of War.

The main features of the proposed system are as follows:

In time of peace and war the military forces of the country to consist of—

The Regular Army;

The National Volunteers; and

The Militia.

The Regular Army in time of peace to be organized on the expansive principle and in proportion to the population, not to exceed one thousand in one million.

The National Volunteers to be officered and supported by the Government, to be organized on the expansive principle and to consist in time of peace of one battalion of two hundred men to each congressional district.

The Militia to be supported exclusively by the States and as a last resort to be used only as intended by the Constitution, namely, to execute the laws, suppress insurrections, and repel invasions.

Military resources are one thing and military strength another. For military resistance, the strength of a government is the power it can wield on the field of battle. In the War of 1812 the strength of the Government at the Battle of Bladensburg was measured by 6,000 militia; at Bull Run it was measured by 35,000 of the same kind of troops. In one case the Capital fell into the hands of the enemy, while in the other our existence as a nation possibly depended upon the irresolution and supineness of a band of insurgents. At Gettysburg the wave of rebellion was resisted by 80,000 veteran

troops; had we trusted to the same number of militia the capital would have been captured and the Government hopelessly destroyed. Unable to suppress in two years an insurrection which culminated in a great rebellion, the representatives of the people were forced to adopt conscription and to concentrate in the hands of the President all the war powers granted by the Constitution, whereupon weakness gave place to strength, but at the expense of a needless sacrifice of life and property.

If in time of rebellion our own Government grew more despotic as it grew stronger, it is not to be inferred that there is any necessary connection between despotism and military strength.

Twenty thousand regular troops at Bull Run would have routed the insurgents, settled the question of military resistance, and relieved us from the pain and suspense of four years of war.

E. U.

FORT MONROE, VA., 1880.

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## THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR.

### Battle of Bunker Hill.

As early as the year 1774 several of the colonies began to make preparations for an armed conflict with Great Britain. In Massachusetts, although the royal governor had countermanded the summons convening the colonial assembly, the members came together and resolved themselves into a Provincial Congress, with John Hancock as president.

The Massachusetts troops were organized by giving a captain's commission to anyone who could enroll a company of 59 men, and the commission of a colonel to anyone who could get together ten such companies.

This system, under which ability to raise men is made the sole qualification for command, deserves particular attention, since it has come down to our own times and has been employed, without exception, at the beginning of all our wars.

Immediately after the engagement of Lexington, militia and minute men from all the New England colonies—individually, by company, and by regiment—began to assemble near Boston, and these half-organized troops, which only by courtesy recognized a common commander, fought, on the 17th of June, the battle of Bunker Hill.

In the three assaults upon the redoubt and breastworks held by the Americans the British lost 1,054 men, including 85 officers, an aggregate in killed and wounded almost one-half greater than that sustained in any subsequent battle of the war; the casualties on the American side, 490 in all, mostly took place while the troops were retreating across Charlestown Neck, after the capture of the works.

The lesson to be learned from this remarkable conflict is the value of trained officers in command of raw troops, a lesson which neither our statesmen nor our historians have ever been able to appreciate.

In the battle, conspicuous above all for bravery, were Prescott, Putnam, Stark, Knowlton, and many other officers who had received a military training in the French and Indian wars.



The troops in the redoubt and behind the rail breastworks were rendered calm and determined by the coolness, judgment, and resolution of their commanders.

Without pausing to discover the secret of the defense of Bunker Hill, the mistaken conviction seized the public mind that the militia were invincible and that patriotism was the sole qualification for a soldier's calling—a fallacy which paralyzed the military legislation of the Revolution and constantly jeopardized our liberties by inducing the political leaders of the time to rely too confidently upon raw and undisciplined levies.

#### **Continental Army Militia.**

Soon after the troops began to arrive in the neighborhood of Boston it became evident that the contest would extend beyond New England, and that to prevent the dissolution of the force already gathered together it must be adopted as a Continental Army.

Recognizing the importance of having a body of men to reenforce the Regular Army in times of emergency, Congress recommended "to the inhabitants of the United English Colonies that all able-bodied, effective men, between 16 and 50 years of age, be formed into companies of militia. That the officers of each company be chosen by the respective companies."

The militia could only be called out with the consent of the State legislatures. They were specially intended for home defense and to make head against forays of the enemy in the absence of the Regular or Continental Army.

The slow increase of the Continental Army shows that Congress was committed to a dual military establishment, one class of troops being Continental or regular, the other militia. In the former the gradual extension of enlistments to two and three years enabled the men to acquire the discipline which ultimately proved the salvation of our cause. The natural disposition of men to seek the easiest and shortest service prompted them to enlist in the militia in preference to the Continental regiments, and thus the only force which could be depended upon to cope with the British, both offensively and defensively, was always from one-third to one-half below its prescribed strength.

#### **Jealousy of a Standing Army.**

During the Revolution the intense feeling of opposition to a standing arm almost wrought the ruin of our cause. Since then this feeling has been diligently kept up and has formulated itself into the maxim that "A standing army is dangerous to liberty." Without considering the distinction between the hirelings of a despot and an army of citizens created by the representatives of a free people, it has been and still is the policy of our Government to maintain an inexpensive military establishment and upon the smallest possible basis. To such an extent has this been carried that our Regular Army has not been able to meet even the ordinary exigencies of times of peace.

The annals of the Revolution show conclusively that for the lack of a well-disciplined regular army, enlisted for the war, we were continually forced to call out double and treble the number of raw troops.



So far as the Army is concerned, it is believed that a careful study of the history of this period will convince the candid inquirer that our liberties can be imperiled only by a policy which eschews well-grounded principles of military organization and compels us in time of danger to call forth vast bodies of men, when smaller numbers should suffice.

Washington writes:

The jealousy of a standing army and the evils to be apprehended from one are remote and, in my judgment, situated and circumstanced as we are, not at all to be dreaded; but the consequence of wanting one, according to my ideas formed from the present view of things, is certain and inevitable ruin. For, if I was called upon to declare upon oath whether the militia had been most serviceable or hurtful, upon the whole I should subscribe to the latter.

#### **Bounty.**

The bounty system was a child of the Revolution, called into being when the colonies denied Congress the power of compelling enlistments. It grew steadily during the long struggle for independence, only to reach its full maturity in our late Civil War.

Any system of voluntary enlistments necessarily places a Government in the position of a suppliant, and when patriotism and popular enthusiasm no longer suffice to fill the ranks, resort must be had to the vicious practice of giving bounties to recruits. Even at that early day the letters of Washington refer to the bad effects of this practice.

While Congress was thus bidding for men, the States began to bid in opposition, both for recruits for the Continental Army and for the militia. October 30, Congress asked Maryland to reconsider its resolution giving a \$10 colonial bounty in lieu of 100 acres of land, assigning as a reason that other soldiers would demand the same bounty and require Congress to grant it.

While the patriotism of a people, taken collectively, is quite equal to keeping up a prolonged struggle for liberty, cost what it may, we find that the patriotism of the individual utterly fails to induce him to undergo, voluntarily, the hardships and dangers of war.

As the war went on the increasing difficulty of procuring recruits necessitated the payment of larger bounties. In addition to the bounty of clothing, of land, and of money already voted, Congress, on the 23d of January, 1779, authorized Washington to grant a bounty not exceeding \$200 to each able-bodied veteran or new recruit who would reenlist or enlist for the war.

#### **Strength of the Army, 1777.**

At the very beginning of the year our lack of military wisdom had reduced Washington's regular soldiers to less than a thousand, while the enemy had more than 20,000 veterans in and about New York. It is needless to point out how much the fortunes of our cause at that junction were furthered by the inaction of the English commander.

The number of men raised for the Continental Army was less than one-half of the quota, while the total number of troops fell short of the number furnished in 1776 by 20,931.

This decline in military strength must be attributed to the system of enlistments rather than to any want of determination to carry on the war.

### Washington's Criticism of the Militia.

Further confirmed in his convictions by the defeat of Gen. Gates, Washington wrote to the President of Congress on the 15th of September, 1780:

I am happy to find that the last disaster in Carolina has not been so great as its first features indicated. This event, however, adds itself to many others to exemplify the necessity of an army and the fatal consequences of depending on militia. Regular troops alone are equal to the exigencies of modern war, as well for defense as offense, and whenever a substitute is attempted it must prove illusory and ruinous. No militia will ever acquire the habits necessary to resist a regular force. Even those nearest to the seat of war are only valuable as light troops to be scattered in the woods and harass rather than do serious injury to the enemy. The firmness requisite for the real business of fighting is only to be attained by a constant course of discipline and service. I have never yet been witness to a single instance that can justify a different opinion, and it is most earnestly to be wished that the liberties of America may no longer be trusted, in any material degree, to so precarious a dependence. I can not but remark that it gives me pain to find the measures pursuing at the southward still turn upon accumulating large bodies of militia, instead of once for all making a decided effort to have a permanent force. In my ideas of the true system of war at the southward, the object ought to be to have a good army rather than a large one.

### Strength of the Army.

The number of soldiers furnished by the several States to the Continental Army during the war was as follows:

Massachusetts	67, 907
Connecticut	31, 939
Virginia	26, 678
Pennsylvania	25, 678
New York	17, 781
Maryland	13, 912
New Hampshire	12, 497
New Jersey	10, 726
North Carolina	7, 263
South Carolina	6, 417
Rhode Island	5, 908
Georgia	2, 679
Delaware	2, 386
Total	231, 771

The number of militia furnished by the several States during the war, according to the returns and conjectural estimates of the Secretary of War, was 164,087.

Total Continentals and militia furnished during the war, 395,858.

If we examine these figures, it will appear that in 1776, when the aggregate number of our troops reached 89,600, the British had but 20,121, and that from that time our number steadily dwindled down to 29,340 in 1781, while the British strength constantly increased till it reached 42,075.

Looking back at the whole Revolutionary struggle, notwithstanding our employment from first to last of almost 400,000 men, we find that but two military events had a direct bearing upon the expulsion of the British. One of these was the capture of Burgoyne; the other that of Cornwallis—an event which was only made possible by the cooperation of a French army and a French fleet.

### Pensions.

The statistics of the Revolution already quoted show that our extravagance called out from first to last more than 395,000 men, all of whom, under our pension system, had a claim upon the gratitude of the Nation. The greatest number of troops that Congress was able to raise during any one year of the war (1776) was 89,600 men, of whom 42,700 were militia.

The largest force, Continental and militia, that Washington could lead to battle at any one time was less than 17,000, while at the battles of Trenton and Princeton, during the time of our greatest peril, his effective strength was less than 4,000.

If we now turn from the reports of the small armies in the field to the report of the Commissioner of Pensions it will be found that a feeble military policy gave us an army of pensioners numbering 95,753, of whom 39,287 were widows.

Unlike the dissolving armies in the field, the pension rolls for 1875 show that 92 years after the close of the war the army of the Revolutionary pensioners was still represented by 379 widows. The last Revolutionary soldier expired in 1869, eighty-six years after the close of the struggle.

The total amount paid to Revolutionary pensioners up to June 30, 1876, for periods of service of six months and over was \$46,177,845.44.

To widows of soldiers who served six months the total amount paid to June 30, 1876, was \$19,668,795.70.

If to these figures be added \$15,000,000, the approximate amount paid to invalids disabled in the Revolution, the total of pensions in round numbers amounts to \$80,000,000.

### Expense of the War.

Exclusive of bounties paid by individuals, towns, and counties, and of provisions seized by impressment for the use of the Army, the debt of Congress and of the States, at the close of the war, amounted to \$170,000,000. If to this sum be added the two hundred millions of currency, for the redemption of which the faith of the Continental Congress and the Confederation was twice solemnly pledged, the debt actually incurred by the war amounted to \$370,000,000.

Small as this sum may appear when compared with the rebellion war debt of three thousand millions, investigation will show that the indebtedness of the Revolution was greater in proportion to population.

Assuming three millions as the total number of our people at the beginning of the Revolution, the whole cost of this war to each man, woman and child was \$123, while, upon the basis of a population of 31,000,000 in 1861, the total cost per capita of the War of the Rebellion was but \$96.

Both of these wars were waged upon the same extravagant system, and so long as we blindly adhere to it similar pecuniary sacrifices are sure to follow in the train of every great military contest of the future.

### Lessons from the Revolution.

The lessons to be drawn from the Revolution are:

That in proportion as the General Government gives the States authority to arm and equip troops it lessens the military strength



of the whole people and correspondingly increases the national expenditures.

That when a nation attempts to combat disciplined troops with raw levies, it must maintain an army of at least twice the size of that of the enemy, and even then have no guarantee of success.

That neither voluntary enlistments based on patriotism, nor the bounty, can be relied upon to supply men for the army during a prolonged war.

That the draft, connected or not connected with voluntary enlistments and bounties, is the only sure reliance of a government in time of war.

That short enlistments are destructive to discipline, constantly expose an army to disaster, and inevitably prolong war with all its attendant dangers and expenses.

That short enlistments at the beginning of a war tend to disgust men with the service, and force the Government to resort either to bounties or the draft.

That regular troops, engaged for the war, are the only safe reliance of a government, and are in every point of view the best and most economical.

That when a nation at war relies upon a system of regulars and volunteers, or regulars and militia, the men, in the absence of compulsion, or very strong inducements, will invariably enlist in the organizations most lax in discipline.

That troops become reliable only in proportion as they are disciplined; that discipline is the fruit of long training, and can not be attained without the existence of a good corps of officers.

That the insufficiency of numbers to counterbalance a lack of discipline should convince us that our true policy, both in peace and war, as Washington puts it, "Ought to be to have a good army rather than a large one."

## BETWEEN THE REVOLUTION AND THE WAR OF 1812.

### Militia Act, 1792.

The constant Indian troubles, and the possibility of a conflict with foreign powers, brought about a widespread conviction that the national defense could not be neglected. The statesmen then turned to the militia and tried to satisfy public opinion by establishing a uniform militia throughout the United States.

The first section of the act laid down the truly democratic doctrine that every able-bodied male citizen owed military service to his country, and likewise provided for a system of enrollment and territorial recruiting. These two features of the law were so praiseworthy and of such vital importance that all its other defects may be overlooked. Again and again the Continental Army was on the verge of dissolution because both of these principles were ignored; and to their subsequent neglect we shall be able to trace most of the weakness and waste which still characterize our wars.

Aside, however, from the military defects of the system, it is only when we examine it from the standpoint of the taxpayer that its fundamental errors become fully apparent. For one National Army were substituted thirteen or more State armies. In place of having



a small but efficient force of regulars, supported by indirect taxation, the citizens of each State were called upon to pay over their hard-earned dollars to maintain undisciplined bodies of militia, totally ignorant of the first principles of the military art. Even had all the States with patriotic regard for the welfare of the whole country maintained their quotas of militia during the long intervals of peace, they would have been at the expense of a large military force for the benefit of the General Government, and that, too, without compensation except in time of war. If, on the contrary, as has since happened, certain States should fail to keep up a militia, the burden of their shortcomings would be unjustly borne by the remainder.

View it in whatever light we may, the conversion of the militia into an army of the first line, as designed by the law, was a wild and impracticable scheme. This class of our citizen soldiers will never take the place wisely reserved for them by the framers of the Constitution until it becomes our settled policy to call them out as a last resort only, in case of actual invasion.

Although this army, of which Washington was appointed Commander in Chief with the rank of lieutenant general, was never called into service, the provisions of the law show that the country proposed to rely upon regulars and volunteers, instead of upon regulars and militia, and that so far as the regulars were concerned, the mistake of short enlistments was not to be repeated.

#### Provisional Army, 1798-99.

Had this force been raised, the Regular Army would have numbered about 40,000 men.

Thus, in addition to the Regular Army, the military legislation of that period, profiting by our Revolutionary experience, had provided a body of national volunteers, officered by the President, to take the place of the State militia troops. Had this organization come down to the beginning of the late war it is more than probable that in one-half the time 300,000 men would have done the work finally accomplished by little less than 3,000,000.

### THE WAR OF 1812.

#### Cause of the Failure of the Campaign.

The failures and disasters of the campaign can be plainly traced to the pernicious military organization established by the act of 1792. It will be remembered that, instead of relying upon a small but well-disciplined regular establishment, this law intrusted the safety and honor of the Nation to armies of militia supported by the several States during the long intervals of peace. These armies, though elaborately organized on paper into battalions, brigades, and divisions, were only to receive such drill and instruction as the various States might think proper.

Though an alarming defect became apparent at the very outset of the war, when the unlooked-for opposition of two State governors deprived the President of the control of a portion of the militia, and was thus able to paralyze for the time being the military power of their respective States, and defeat the plans of the General Govern-

ment, it remained for the fruitless campaigns at the West and the cruel and disheartening experiences at Queenstown to fully reveal the utter worthlessness of the new system.

Led to a certain extent by those who had gained actual military experience during the Revolution or on the Indian frontier, endowed with perhaps more average intelligence and education than the regulars; supplied with the same food, clothing, and equipments as they were, the marked inferiority of the militia troops was largely due to the brief period of their service, to the conviction that their time would soon be "out," and that others must take their places and bear the burdens and dangers of the contest.

While their pay was no greater than that of other troops, when we deduct the time lost in coming and going, as well as that consumed in partial and unavailing instruction, their real cost to the country was infinitely greater.

#### The Capture of Washington.

No better example can be given of the mismanagement of this war, than the measures adopted by the President and his Cabinet for the defense of the Capital in 1814.

Although a British fleet, with about 3,000 troops on board, had been hovering along the shores of the Chesapeake for nearly a year, it was not until June that the attention of the administration was first turned to the danger that confronted the Capital. It was then found by the Secretary of War that the regular troops in the fifth military district, embracing the States of Maryland and Virginia, numbered but 2,208 men. These troops composed to a large extent of recruits, were dispersed at various points along the Chesapeake, from Baltimore to Norfolk, and were therefore incapable of speedy concentration.

The downfall of Napoleon having made it possible for Great Britain to reinforce her troops in America, July 2, the tenth military district was created, consisting of the State of Maryland, the District of Columbia, and that part of Virginia lying between the Rappahannock and the Potomac.

The command of the new district was devolved upon Gen. Winder.

July 12 and 17, Gen. Winder was authorized "in case of actual or menaced invasion of the district under his command," to call out the entire Maryland quota of 6,000, as also 2,000 from Virginia, 2,000 from the District of Columbia, and 5,000 from Pennsylvania—in all 15,000 men.

On the 24th of August the army, described by its commander as "suddenly assembled without organization," or discipline, or officers of the least knowledge of service, numbered 5,401, of whom 400 were regulars, 600 marines, and 20 sailors, the remainder being volunteers and militia.

The same day the army thus hastily assembled was as hastily formed in order of battle at Bladensburg, where, in the presence of the President and the Cabinet, it was attacked and routed with the loss of but 8 killed and 11 wounded.

The British force numbered 3,500, of which only a part of the advanced division of 1,500 were engaged.

**Number of Troops.**

The number of troops employed at different times from the beginning to the end of the war was:

Regulars (including about 5,000 sailors and marines)-----	56, 032
Volunteers-----	10, 110
Rangers-----	3, 049
Militia-----	458, 463
Total-----	527, 654

The terms of service of the troops were as follows, for—

12 months or more, including sailors and marines-----	63, 179
6 months or more-----	66, 325
3 months or more-----	125, 643
1 month or more-----	125, 307
Less than 1 month-----	147, 200
Total-----	527, 654

The officers of this Army of more than half a million of men numbered:

Regulars-----	2, 271
Volunteers, rangers, and militia-----	31, 210
Total-----	33, 481

The number of officers who had received a professional education at the Military Academy up to June, 1814, was 120.

In default of an efficient Regular Army, the number 458,463 shows to what extent the administration was compelled to rely upon the States in pursuance of the military system of 1792; the number 398,150, which represents the number of men who served for periods less than six months, shows but partially to what extent we adopted, as in the Revolution, the policy of raw troops and short enlistments.

The failure of Congress, at the beginning of the war, to declare in favor of territorial recruitment and obligatory service, affords another result equally striking. The Army voted in January, 1812, was 35,000 men; the number of inexperienced officers ultimately called out and whose average pay was at least four times that of the private soldier was 33,481.

Instead of falling upon the 5,000 British regulars who held Canada, at the beginning, and crushing them in a single battle, we allowed them to baffle every attempt at invasion, and to prolong the war till our loss in killed and wounded numbered 5,614.

In contrast with our reckless extravagance in employing more than a half million of men the largest force of British regulars opposed to us was 16,500.

**Cost of the War.**

These figures, \$198,000,000, which do not embrace the millions paid for pensions since 1823, may be accepted with slight variation as the immediate cost of the war.

Had Congress from 1808 to 1811 applied one-fourth of this sum to the maintenance of an army of 15,000 men, so organized as to have been capable of expansion by the aid of voluntary enlistments and obligatory service to double or triple its numbers, there is little reason to doubt that Canada would have been ours, and the war brought to a close on a single campaign.



In the Revolutionary War, notwithstanding the steady decline of our military strength two British armies of more than 6,000 men each, were made captive; in the War of 1812, less than 5,000 men, for the period of two years brought war and devastation into our territory, and successfully withstood the misapplied power of 7,000,000 of people.

## FLORIDA (INDIAN) WAR

1836-1841.

The lessons taught by this war are:

First. That its expense was tripled, if not quadrupled, by that feature of the law of 1821 which gave the President, in times of emergency, no discretion to increase the enlisted men of the Army.

Second. That, as in every previous war, after successfully employing for short periods of service militia and volunteers, and exhausting their enthusiasm, Congress found it more humane and economical to continue hostilities with regular troops, enlisted for the period of five years.

Third. That for want of a well-defined peace organization, a nation of 17,000,000 of people contended for seven years with 1,200 warriors and finally closed the struggle without accomplishing the forcible emigration of the Indians, which was the original and sole cause of the war.

## MEXICAN WAR.

### Campaigns of Gen. Taylor.

The army of occupation on arriving opposite Matamoras, May, 1846, was composed of 3,554 officers and men, all of the old establishment. The weakness of its numbers in no way daunted its commander. He knew that four-fifths of his officers had received the benefits of professional training at the Military Academy or in the Florida War. Beyond this, he was conscious that the discipline and esprit de corps of his troops had been brought to the highest point by six months of training in the camp of instruction at Corpus Christi. With this preparation and with practically no authority to increase his force till an invasion should actually take place, the commander was soon destined to confront a large and well-organized Mexican army.

In concluding his official report on the battles of Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma, Gen. Taylor stated:

Our victory has been decisive. A small force has overcome immense odds of the best troops that Mexico can furnish—veteran regiments perfectly equipped and appointed. Eight pieces of artillery, several colors and standards, a great number of prisoners, including 14 officers, and a large amount of baggage and public property have fallen into our hands. The causes of victory are doubtless to be found in the superior quality of our officers and men.

The effect of this brilliant initiative was felt to the end of the war. It gave our troops courage to fight against overwhelming numbers, demoralized the enemy, and afforded a striking proof of the truth of the maxim, "That in war, moral force is to physical as three is to one." In all of the subsequent battles our troops were outnumbered two or three to one, yet they marched steadily forward to victory,



and for the first time in our history temporarily convinced our statesmen, if not the people, of the value of professional education and military discipline.

#### **Battle of Buena Vista.**

In January, 1847, nearly all the regular troops, as also a large number of volunteers, were withdrawn from Gen. Taylor at Monterey to take part under Gen. Scott in the campaign against the City of Mexico.

This detachment reduced the force to about 6,000 men. Availing himself of this division of our forces, Gen. Santa Ana advanced to Buena Vista, where, on the 22d and 23d of February, he sought to overwhelm and capture our army. In this battle, the most desperate of the war, our forces, numbering 4,759 men, of whom but 517 were regulars, defeated the entire Mexican army estimated at 20,000. Our losses were 746 killed, wounded, and missing. The Mexican loss was estimated at 1,500. In his official report Gen. Taylor gave the regular artillery, composed of the celebrated batteries of Washington, Sherman, and Bragg, the credit of saving the day. But the battle of Buena Vista, like all great battles, was fought chiefly by infantry, and the gallant volunteers, who, against overwhelming numbers, successfully maintained the honor of our arms, had been undergoing field training for nearly eight months, a period twice as long as the time considered necessary to transform a recruit into a regular soldier.

#### **Campaign of the City of Mexico.**

After advancing from Vera Cruz to Puebla, fearing exposure to the yellow fever, and beginning to look forward to their discharge six weeks before the expiration of their term of enlistment, Gen. Scott, on the 4th of May, 1847, parted with seven of his eleven regiments of volunteers, numbering in the aggregate 4,000 men. Thus reduced by discharge, by expiration of service, and by disease to 5,820 effective men, our army, which had advanced to Puebla, within three days' march of the enemy's capital, was compelled for more than two months to remain on the defensive, while the enemy, profiting by the delay, reorganized an army of five times its number.

Had the small force of Gen. Scott, embracing nine-tenths of the Regular Army, been captured, experience teaches us that with the system of short enlistments and inexperienced officers, 100,000 raw troops could not have retrieved the disaster.

Reinforced in the aggregate to nearly 14,000 men, of whom 3,000 were sick or in hospital, while other detachments were made to guard the line of communications, Gen. Scott, on the 7th of August resumed the offensive against an army estimated by the Mexicans themselves at 36,000 men and 100 pieces of cannon.

The four volunteer regiments with Gen. Scott had been organized in December of 1846, had had the benefit of eight months' training, had already participated in the siege of Vera Cruz and the battle of Cerro Gordo, and were worthy of being called reliable troops. Advancing with an army of less than 10,000 effectives, the brilliant victories of Contreras, Churubusco, El Molino del Rey, and Chapultepec opened the gates of the capital, which Gen. Scott entered on

the 14th of September. In the series of battles, beginning on the 20th of August, our largest force engaged was 8,479; our loss in killed and wounded was 2,703, which reduced the army when it reached the city to less than 6,000 men.

The aggregate strength of the three regiments of volunteers which participated in these battles—the fourth being left to garrison Puebla—was on the morning of the battle of Contreras 1,580. The aggregate strength of the Army, regulars and volunteers, on the same date was 11,052.

#### Number of Troops.

With the salient facts before us, that Gen. Taylor fought the first battles of the war with 2,100 regulars, when, but for the defect of the law, he might have had, by a simple increase of the rank and file, a force of 8,000; that the 13 regiments of the Regular Army with which Gen. Scott landed at Vera Cruz could have been raised to 15,000 men; that with such an army he could have entered the City of Mexico on the heels of Cerro Gordo; that at no time before the event his maximum force exceeded 13,500, and that after a brilliant series of battles he finally entered the Mexican capital with less than 6,000 men, let us next consider the number of troops the Government employed:

Regulars -----	31, 024
Volunteers -----	73, 332
Total -----	104, 356

From these figures it will be perceived that the regular troops, 31,024, exceeded more than six times the number of regulars and volunteers with whom Taylor at Buena Vista defeated the entire Mexican Army; while, omitting the three and six months' men and adding 31,024 to the 60,659 volunteers for 12 months and the war, the aggregate, 91,683 regulars and volunteers, was nine times as great as the effective strength of the army with which Scott fought the decisive battles around the City of Mexico. The greatest strength of the Mexican Army was never estimated to exceed 36,000 men.

#### Lessons of the War.

Notwithstanding its unnecessary prolongation, the Mexican War marked a great change if not a revolution in our military policy. This result was due to the decay and gradual abandonment of the militia system which up to that time had been regarded as the "great bulwark of national defense." Bearing in mind that the laws under which military operations were prosecuted were almost identical with the laws of 1812, let us examine the composition of the forces employed in the two wars:

	War of 1812.	War with Mexico.
Regulars.....	50, 000	31, 024
Militia.....	458, 463	12, 601
Volunteers and rangers.....	13, 159	60, 659
Total.....	521, 622	104, 284



A comparison of these figures shows that while in the War of 1812 the combined force of regulars and volunteers of 12 or more months' service was but 12 per cent of the total number of troops employed, the same force in the Mexican War was no less than 88 per cent. The contrast does not stop here. In the first war, relying upon the States instead of appealing directly to the people as intended by the Constitution, Congress became a witness of disasters like those which occurred in the Revolution; in the second, the national troops, organized and supported by Congress, achieved a series of victories unmarred by a single defeat.

In one war, an army of more than 6,000 raw troops, posted in the defense of our own capital, fled with a loss of but 19 killed and wounded; in the other a force of less than 5,000 trained volunteers, supported by a few regular troops, overthrow a Mexican army of four times its number.

In one war, an enemy numbering less than 5,000 men baffled all of our efforts at invasion; in the other our Army, with less than 6,000 combatants, entered in triumph the enemy's capital.

But the difference between the results of the two wars is not wholly to be ascribed to the substitution of national volunteers for the militia. In the War of 1812 the Regular Army, which had itself to be created, was unable to furnish a standard of skill and discipline. In the Mexican War, aside from sustaining the principal losses in killed and wounded, it furnished able commanders, and in every field set an example of skill, fortitude, and courage.

As to the influence of military education in producing such diversity of results, Gen. Scott, who, in 1814, was compelled to teach the regular officers of his brigade the elements of squad drill, left his views to the Senate in the memorable words:

I give as my fixed opinion that but for our graduated cadets the war between the United States and Mexico might, and probably would, have lasted some four or five years, with, in its first half, more defeats than victories falling to our share; whereas in less than two campaigns we conquered a great country and a peace without the loss of a single battle or skirmish.

## THE WAR OF THE REBELLION.

### Conditions at the Outbreak.

At the close of the year 1860 we presented to the world the spectacle of a great nation nearly destitute of military force. Our territory from ocean to ocean exceeded 3,000,000 square miles; our population numbered 31,000,000 people.

The Regular Army as organized consisted of 18,093 officers and men, but according to the returns it numbered only 16,367.

The line of the Army was composed of 198 companies, of which 183 were stationed on the frontier or were en route to distant posts west of the Mississippi. The remaining 15 companies were stationed along the Canadian frontier and on the Atlantic coast from Maine to the Gulf of Mexico.

The militia for a sudden emergency were scarcely more available than the Army. Nominally they numbered more than 3,000,000, but mostly unorganized. So destitute were they of instruction and training that—a few regiments in the large cities excepted—they did not merit the name of a military force.

Such was the condition of the national defense when, on the 20th of December, 1860, South Carolina in convention passed the ordinance of secession.

Alarmed at the impending danger, the President, as had been done so often before, turned to the militia. On the 9th of April, 1861, a call was made upon the District of Columbia for 10 companies, but when paraded for muster many through disloyalty refused to be sworn, while others imposed the condition that they should not be required to serve beyond the limits of the District.

In the meantime so prompt was the response to the Confederate call for 100,000 volunteers, that by the middle of April 35,000 men were equipped for the field. Conscious of their strength, they at once seized our arsenals and began the siege of our forts.

For the want of an expansive regular army or a system of national volunteers, the President was again compelled to look to the States, and therefore on the 15th of April, issued his proclamation calling for 75,000 militia for the period of three months.

The advantage so far as related to the forces in the field was, at the time decidedly on the side of the Confederates. The Government had called for 75,000 militia for the period of three months; the Confederates had called for 100,000 volunteers for the period of one year. Both had repeated the blunder of short enlistment.

Nevertheless, in default of further measures, on the part of the President, the Government at the end of three months would see the forces dissolved, while the Confederate Army, constantly improving in discipline, would still be available for nine months of field service.

#### Use of the Regular Army.

To anyone familiar with our military history, the difficulties of recruiting regulars in competition with volunteers, would have suggested the reduction of the line of the Army to a cadre, and the dispersion of its officers as commanders and instructors among the new troops. Had this course been adopted every regiment of volunteer infantry, cavalry, and artillery might have had a regular officer for a leader, and with these to guide the instruction, three months would have sufficed to give us an army in fair drill and discipline.

The volunteers themselves felt the need of this policy, and when first called to arms, eagerly sought trained commanders.

At the time Congress indicated the desire that trained officers should be employed in positions of the greatest usefulness, it had at its disposal more than 600 captains and lieutenants who would have made able and efficient colonels. Yet by giving to governors the authority to appoint officers, without reserving to the President the right to designate at least one field officer in each regiment, Congress not only thwarted its own intentions, but needlessly jeopardized the national success.

While our military legislation relating to the line deprived the Government of all right to appoint trained leaders to the regiments of the Volunteer Army, the great departments of supply, on the contrary, were placed wholly under the supervision and control of regular officers.



### Battle of Bull Run.

The acceptance before the 1st of July, of more than 200,000 volunteers for the term of three years, did not deliver the Government from the temptation of again testing the folly of short enlistments.

Mistaking numbers for strength, and forgetting, too, that the fame of the militia at Bunker Hill and New Orleans was acquired behind formidable entrenchments, Congress and the Cabinet, the press and the people, united in demanding that before their discharge the 75,000 three-months' men should be led into battle.

The disaster that ensued demands that the causes leading to it be carefully considered. First among them was the popular but mistaken belief that because our citizens individually possess courage, fortitude, and self-reliance, they must necessarily possess the same qualities when aggregated as soldiers. And next to this error was the fatal delusion, that an army animated by patriotism needed neither instruction nor discipline to prepare it for battle.

The effect of this disastrous battle (Bull Run), which gave the enemy all the advantages of the initiative, had he chosen to use it, was to paralyze military operations for more than six months.

### Military Legislation in 1861.

The military system under which, in two campaigns of seven weeks each, Prussia, humiliated Austria, in 1866, and subverted the French Empire in 1870, was the joint product of soldiers and statesmen, who began their labors (1806) immediately after the disastrous battle of Jena. The military system under which we subdued the Rebellion was established by Congress in less than four weeks.

In 1792 Congress organized the militia and declared in favor of obligatory military service, on the theory that the militia were the bulwark of the Nation. Subsequently Indian difficulties and armed conflicts with two foreign nations compelled it to raise and support a regular army. Both of these organizations in 1861 it summarily rejected. Instead of expanding the Regular Army, and making it the chief instrument in executing the national will, it violated the practice of every civilized nation by calling into existence an army of a million untrained officers and men.

It should not surprise us that under a system so improvident, voluntary enlistments finally proved a failure. The enormous demands for men are easily accounted for. The laws, like those at the beginning of each previous war, encouraged short enlistments by giving the President the power to call out volunteers for any term of service from six months to three years. The number of men furnished was to be equalized among the States according to population. The men having been organized into regiments, no provision was made for their recruitment; there were no regimental depots, no assignments of regiments to congressional districts, no requirement that any regiment raised in any State or district should be kept full by voluntary enlistment or draft. There was but one method to prevent depletion, and that the one which, since the siege of Boston, had always proved ineffective—detaching recruiting parties from the field.

The fourth section of the first law was prolific of causes for protracting the war; it was based on the theory of confederation; the

troops were to be State, and not national, and as a consequence, the officers were to be commissioned by the governors and not by the President.

#### Campaign of the Army of the Potomac, 1862.

On the 31st of March, 1862, the Government had in service an army of 637,126 men, nearly all of whom were enlisted for the term of three years.

The Confederate Army, composed largely of one-year volunteers, whose enlistments were on the eve of expiring, scarcely exceeded 200,000 men.

The failure to subdue the Rebellion in 1861 has already been explained by our total want of military organization and preparation. The failure to subdue it in 1862, with the amazing advantages possessed by the Union, proceeded from a cause entirely different—the mismanagement of our armies.

Humiliated and made wiser by the defeat at Bull Run, the President, the Cabinet, and the people, were at first disposed to give the new commander all the time necessary to organize and discipline his troops; but when several months had passed with no indication of an advance, the army in the meantime having increased to above 200,000 men, impatience for action returned with accumulated force.

When Gen. McClellan assumed command, he found his army "cowering on the banks of the Potomac," the troops and the people alike demoralized by the defeat and panic at Bull Run. He knew that but two things, men, and the time to make them soldiers, were necessary to restore the ascendancy of the Government. The men were given liberally, but time to drill them could not be accorded. When the armies throughout the country, with scarcely a shadow of discipline, had swelled to the aggregate of 600,000, the expense of supporting them was so great that the President was forced to declare if something was not soon done "the bottom would be out of the whole affair."

At the time of the appointment of Gen. McClellan the fate of the nation seemed to depend upon this single individual. In the organization of his army he stood alone. None of his brigade, division, or corps commanders had ever seen service as such. None of them, as in Europe, had exercised command at maneuvers or had been practiced in handling large bodies of troops. The colonels, from whom the future brigadiers were mostly to come, were nearly all from civil life, with but little knowledge of tactics or standard of discipline, by which to gauge the proficiency of their troops. A difficulty of nearly equal magnitude confronted him in the staff. The Adjutant General's Department for want of interchangeability with the line could not, as in European services, furnish competent chiefs of staff to himself or to any of his corps and division commanders.

It was during the month lost by the delay at Yorktown, that the Confederate Congress abandoned voluntary enlistments, adopted conscription, and took away from the governors the power to commission Confederate officers; it was during this month, when the Army of the Potomac should have been at the doors of Richmond, that almost every regiment of the Confederate Army was reorganized; it was during this month that Confederate conscripts began to pour into

the old regiments instead of being formed into new organizations; it was during this and the two succeeding months, while McDowell was held back, that these conscripts, associated with veteran comrades, acquired courage and discipline, and it was by concentration during the last month that the Confederate Army was made to equal its opponent. The loss of battles was but a trifle compared with the other consequences of this one month's delay. It arrayed against us a military system, which enabled the Confederate Government to call out the last man and the last dollar, as against a system based on voluntary enlistment and the consent of the States. It was no longer a question of dealing a dissolving army its deathblow. We had permitted a rival government to reorganize its forces, which we now were compelled to destroy by the slow process of attrition.

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